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The Belief in God and Immortality. By JAMES H. LEUBA. Boston, Sherman, French and Company, 1916, 340 p.

The author defines this to be "a psychological, anthropological and statistical study." It is psychological in that it questions the human intellect and emotions; it is anthropological in that it probes into the savage as well as the civilized mind; and it is statistical in that it makes a numerical examination of the intellectual classes in the United States to-day. Its purpose is to determine how far the belief in God and immortality as it is held at the present time is essential to religious and moral progress. The anthropological part of the study contrasts the belief of savages, which it calls "primary," with the belief of civilized men to-day which it calls "modern," and derives from that contrast the conclusion that the savage belief is a product of fear while the civilized belief is the result of desire; that the savage fear arises from dreams and visions while the civilized desire has for its cause the effort to realize ideals and satisfy affection; that the savage mind, fearing ghosts, has no wish to become one; but that the civilized mind has so ardently desired to "continue" after death as to try, one after the other, a number of methods to make valid this desire in an established faith, but only to abandon them as the boundaries of knowledge have enlarged.

The metaphysical method has been found wanting because it proceeds deductively. Its weakness lies in the untenable character of the general assumptions with which it has to begin. The scientific method, which proceeds inductively, is inapplicable because of the lack of trustworthy data, whether physical or psychical. And the method of "direct 'inner experience'" is not valid for the reason that it rests upon the assumption that a sense of personal well-being signifies personal immortality. A feeling of personal well-being is not even an invariable sign of personal health.

Perhaps the most startling part of this work is the latter half. This is the part which is "statistical" in its treatment. It brings to book what it considers the representative classes of this country by examining "college students, physical scientists, biologists, historians, sociologists and economists, and psychologists." The examination was conducted by means of a *questionnaire* so framed and addressed as to relieve it of the suspicion of unreliability which admittedly attaches to most *questionnaires*. The point to be determined was, what proportion of these groups believe in God and immortality—the term God meaning a personal God, or one "to whom one may pray with the expectation of receiving an answer," and the term "immortality" meaning "personal" or "conditional immortality." The net results are: College men, 56%; scientists, 45.2%-55.5%; historians, 48.3%-51.5%; sociologists, 46.3%-55.3%; psychologists, 25.2%-19.8%.

The answer to the fundamental inquiry of the investigation is that a belief in God and immortality as it is held at the present time is not only not essential to religious and moral progress, but it is disadvantageous. It is, indeed, a positive hindrance, because the doubt surrounding it "creates in the upper intellectual circles of the Churches and more particularly among professors and students of theology a situation threatening the most precious possession of teachers and students: their intellectual integrity." A knowledge of the ultimate is not necessary to moral progress. Society may be trusted to generate the impulses and ideals demanded for each stage of advancement. The urge forward and upward will be greater and not less. It is enough to see as far as the horizon.

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